

## EDGARTOWN CLIMATE COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF ZOOM MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 3, 2024

Julia Livingston, the chair of the committee, opened the meeting at 4:09 PM.

The following members of the committee were present on zoom, as follows:

Jennifer Blum  
Josey Kirkland  
Julia Livingston  
Kevin Loughlin

In addition, Alan Strahler, Ellen Price, Jack Connell, Bruce Fowle, and Alan Feldman were present on zoom as invited guests.

The first order of business was a motion to approve the minutes of the November 9 meeting, which had previously been emailed to all committee members. There was a motion duly seconded, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Julia reported that the Edgartown Zoning Bylaw Review Committee has succeeded in getting eight of their nine proposed zoning bylaw change warrant articles accepted by the Planning Board for inclusion in the warrant for the Spring 2024 Town Meeting. She said five of the nine had to do with housing, and the Planning Board decided that the one on Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) should not move forward this year. Three had to do with climate, and all three will move forward: one requires healthy trees over a certain size that are removed to be replaced, one limits the amount of impervious coverage on a lot, and the third limits the total square footage of buildings on a lot to 10,000 sq. ft. with a bonus of 2,000 additional sq. ft. if the only fossil fuel use is for a back-up generator. Julia said the next step is a public hearing on February 20, and she encouraged everyone to tune in on zoom. She also said all of us should be ready to encourage our climate oriented friends to come to the Town Meeting in April.

Alan Feldman asked how the 10,000 sq. ft. number was arrived at. Julia said there was quite a lot of conversation about it in the Zoning Bylaw Review Committee, including a recognition of the fact that, these days, many garages have finished beadboard walls and sinks with hot and cold running water so they can be used for parties and also a recognition of many recent Edgartown residential projects in the 8,000 - 10,000 sq. ft. range. Julia said these houses use an enormous amount of energy and other resources in their construction and also in their operation. The heat is never turned off in the winter when the house is empty, and the air conditioning is never turned off in the summer. Alan said he wished the square footage number was lower. He feels it will be hard to drop it down once it's set at 10,000. Julia said maybe the number would be changed to a lower number at the February 20 public hearing. Ellen asked whether it would be okay for the Energy Committee to raise this at the public hearing. Julia welcomed that idea. Jack asked whether it's total conditioned space or total space. Julia said it's total enclosed space with a ceiling height high enough for a person. Bruce asked about the impervious surface lot coverage proposal, and Julia summarized the proposal, including the material about stormwater recharge systems, most of which came from a Massachusetts DEP model.

Julia then described a telephone conference call Kevin had set up with Alec Scicchitano from the office of Representative Dylan Fernandes and Michael Holcomb from the office of Senator Julian Cyr about maintenance in the State Forest. Both undertook to make some phone calls and report back to us in February. They mentioned that there is legislation currently being considered in Boston to form a trust that would be a way to ensure a regular source of funding for the State Forest. Kevin and Jack both mentioned that there have been serious fires in the

State Forest in the past. Kevin said there is significant danger of embers spreading a fire into settled areas of Edgartown. Jennifer mentioned an October site visit sponsored by the MVC Wildfire Mitigation Committee at which she was told that there isn't a big risk. Julia said we were originally asked to get involved by Adam Moore of the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation because he felt there was a very substantial risk from uncleared brush and debris in the State Forest. Kevin said he would go to the MVC and visit the Wildfire Mitigation Committee. Julia mentioned that she heard there is an area of evergreen trees that were planted long ago, are nearing the end of their natural lives, and would also provide a dangerous amount of fuel in the event of a fire. Jennifer said she would forward material from the site visit.

Next, Julia reported that she and Kevin had attended the December 8 meeting of the CAP Community Coordinating Committee. At this meeting there was discussion of the upcoming Commonwealth of Massachusetts MVP 2.0 program. In order to continue to be eligible for MVP Action Grants, each town must go through the 2.0 process, but it may be possible to band together through the MVC to some extent. Liz Durkee and Meghan Gombos of the MVC will be working to get clarity from the State about what parts of the process can be done jointly through the MVC. At the same time, they are working on a possible grant from NOAA to undertake three initial projects as a framework for future projects. They need letters of collaboration from each of the six towns. Both projects require town representatives on committees to bring underrepresented groups into the planning process. There will be a stipend for the town representatives, and they need to be people who can reach out to and engage with underrepresented groups. Josey asked whether it would be up to each Select Board to choose a committee member. Julia said this seemed to be up in the air. Alan Strahler said Edgartown has been successful in getting MVP Action Grants in the past. Josey said she loved the social justice and climate equity aspects of the MVP 2.0 process.

Next was a Chappaquiddick update. Alan Feldman reported that the tick committee of the Chappaquiddick Island Association has been working with the Martha's Vineyard Land Bank to increase the number of signs warning people they are in tick habitat. He said Sheriff's Meadow is putting their own signs up. He said the solar system for the Community Center is still being delayed by the slow pace of the grant making authorities. Bruce said the Chappy ferry planning is still delayed waiting for more money so they can engage a naval architecture consultant. Bruce said the study about the best way for the Chappy ferry to be owned is also still in process. Julia said she will ask James Hagerty about this when she meets with him next week, and she will make the point that electrification of the ferry has to be part of the planning. Kevin recalled the meeting on ferry electrification convened by the MVC last year at the Film Center in Vineyard Haven. Alan Feldman said Paul O'Donnell is taking the lead in the formation of a tax-exempt corporation to possibly own the Chappy ferry, and Paul is very aware of the need to plan for electrification. Jack agreed that the change of ownership should take the need for electrification into account.

As to the Harbor Management Plan, Julia reported that Peter sent an email saying there was a meeting of the committee on December 22, and they are making good progress. They expect to have a final review in January, an open Town forum soon thereafter, and submission to the State for approval after that.

As to the Edgartown Master Plan, Julia reported that it is nearing the point at which it will go to the Planning Board for their approval and to the consultants for final tweaking before it goes to the State for approval. Julia said that part of our job on the Climate Committee will be to nudge some of the things in the Master Plan forward over time as best as we can.

As to our 2024 card, Julia said we should start working on it soon and mentioned the idea of possibly showcasing the Vineyard Conservation Society water refill stations located in Edgartown.

Julia said that she is going to send out a list of Town Departments and hopes that committee members will send it back indicating which ones they would like to talk to.

Julia asked everyone to keep thinking about possible new Climate Committee members. Josey offered to mention this at the next Climate Cafe.

Julia reported that, as she did for 2022, Jennifer is preparing two reports summarizing what the Climate Committee has done over the current year - one to be printed in the Town's Annual Report and one to be delivered to the Select Board at one of their meetings.

Julia said Peter Meleney of the Oak Bluffs Climate Committee would like someone from Edgartown to join his new committee to encourage private property owners to plant the majestic trees of the future. Bruce said he would like to be in touch with Peter about this.

Julia said Melinda Loberg of Tisbury has started an adopt-a-drain program. Jennifer said we should bring this up with Allan deBettencourt when we talk to him and then follow up with Melinda if Allan likes the idea.

Jennifer recommended the upcoming program on January 6 at 1:30 at the Oak Bluffs Library where Nina Hitchen will give a talk on "Ditching Plastics."

Ellen recommended the Cape Climate Action Network meeting on zoom on February 22 at 7:00 pm.

There was a unanimous vote to adjourn at 5:11 PM.